Confrontations With The Absurd

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"*In a mad world, only the made are sane.*" -Akira Kurosawa

Albert Camus was a Frenchie who was most certainly not an ally, being a journalist for the French Resistance & generally considered a leading figure in the New Left. Regardless, he does fall into my general philosophical camp & his *Myth of Sisyphus* is considered essential reading after the likes Nietzsche & Dostoyevsky. You'd probably recognize him from his most famous quote, "One must imagine Sisyphus happy."

Although he's often referred to as an existentialist philosopher, or founder of absurdism as a philosopher, he rejected the title of philosopher & only wanted to be known as an author. This is the same reason he rejected the title of existentialist, because having that title would make him a de facto philosopher. An understandable desire.

His contribution to the nihilist camp is the concept of *The Absurd.* The Absurd is a similar concept to Nietzsche's Death of God. It refers to the seeming absurdity of the Cosmos, particularly in relation to the human tendency to seek meaning. Whereas Nietzsche's idea refers to more civilizational phenomena, Camus' is more personal & psychological. It can be thought of as the Death of God within oneself. It's not necessarily something that happens once, or even occasionally. Camus thought this was something that people constantly dealt with throughout their life. That sort of nagging thought of "does this even matter" or questioning whether creating something is worth the effort once you realize that everything returns to dust eventually. The suicide question itself. This whole type of thinking is what Camus calls confrontations with the Absurd. He treats it as an almost omnipresent aspect of human psychology, at least in the modern era beyond superstition & uniform religious beliefs.

Even the religiously minded can probably relate to the concept, even if they may use different terminology or equate it with satanic temptation. It's often seen as an aspect of certain psychological "disorders" as well. Part of Camus' view, inherited from the wider nihilist umbrella, is that the human tendency to place meaning on the Cosmos by way of things like religion are both incorrect & futile. What sets his Absurdism apart from others in that camp is that it rejects the replacement of that meaning, at least on an individual level. While existentialists like Nietzsche attempt to replace the loss of higher purpose with something more tangible, like striving for the Overman, Camus views any attempt to impart meaning on the Absurd as futile. It leads to an irreconcilable conflict & thus dissonance with reality. This doesn't necessarily mean that Camus felt it to be a waste of time to do things like create art or start a family, Camus did both. He simply taught that you should always acknowledge the inherent absurdity in what you're doing. By acknowledging the Absurd, rather than trying to escape or deny it, you are in tune with the Cosmos & can therefore live a more authentic life.

As I said, Camus denied the title of "philosopher." There were no grandiose metaphysical systems in his writings, which is actually quite limited to the *Myth of Sisyphus* since the majority of his other works are fictional or journalistic. His call to action in the book is starkly personal, more of a mindset to hold than a true call to action. This, & his almost deification of the Absurd, are more than enough & have become cornerstones of the nihilistic camp.

LSD & the Search for God



My own confrontation with the Absurd was probably the single most significant point of my life thus far, not purely because of it but rather the multitude of things that happened around the time. This period, around ages 19 to 20 for the most part, represents almost a prism where the relative simplicity of youth shattered into a rainbow of potential paths. My personal life lined up fairly well with one of the most chaotic situations in recent history, the starting years of the 2020's. More specifically the end of that, as COVID died out & the riots stopped. Essentially, a very tumultuous period where emotions ran high coming to an end.

A key portion of this was religion, more specifically disenchantment. Although I was raised Baptist, Christianity never really gave me much inner peace. As a teenager, I had a sort of desperation in regards to God. I would spend hours scrolling through apologetics media to find solid answers. Some sort of assurance, so I can know which denomination wouldn't get me sent to Hell for following a slightly different script. Obviously, almost all religions are faith based, particularly Christianity. Pascal lays this out fairly well, you have to believe before anything. Unfortunately, that belief isn't something that can be forced onto an individual who doubts it. No amount of trying to fit in with other Christbros will change that. I didn't immediately disavow Christianity by any means, but I generally referred to myself as spiritual or something else vague when asked.

I started looking at religion with more of an "open mind," meaning without the inherent bias you have as a member of one. This was generally equal parts research & personal reflection. I faced significant difficulty trying to actually buy into a lot of spiritual systems, especially as many that you come across online are products of New Age quackery. There's a sort of trend towards perennialism when people look towards religion, most tend to look towards what the oldest faiths were or try to justify their religions as being around far longer than they actually have been. This is actually a major part of my disillusionment with Christianity, learning about the early origins of both it & Judaism, and realizing how it's not as unique as some may lead you to believe. This was also the main reason why people bought into the TradCath nonsense a few years ago btw.

Regardless, very few faiths actually hold up to the (reverse) test of time. The exception is some philosophical schools which build off of Paganism & PIE Paganism itself. Even if we can roughly track the development of specific strains of Paganism (Germanic, Hellenic, Slavic, etc.), it really doesn't matter. It didn't seem to matter much to our ancestors either, who seemed to see themselves as following roughly the same "religion" with different cultural practices & names. As I learned more about Paganism, I eventually started to learn about the material aspects that affected it. This was actually my introduction to pre-Axial Age history, which is now one of my favorite topics. Bronze Age Mindset began getting more popular around this time as well, and I ended up reading that which definitely changed my view of the past. Maybe not so much the book itself, but the rabbit hole it sent me down.

I think it goes without saying that life in Bronze Age was bleak, really only marginally less bleak than the Stone Age. What's not often understood is that the spiritual beliefs of these ancients were arguably equally bleak. There isn't really one common concept of the afterlife, it ranges from reincarnation to a Hel/Sheol type place. The Pagan (or pre-biblical Jewish) afterlife wasn't exactly a paradise, even the specialized afterlives like Valhol were places where the souls of slain warriors spent their eternity training for another war. Almost every conception is about as bleak as an atheistic one. What's important is that these ancient peoples did not have any escapist fantasies regarding the afterlife.

Not to be a redditor, but a quote from the Pirates of the Caribbean movies that's stuck with me is "Life is cruel, why should the afterlife be any different?" Don't remember the context too well but it fits.

A somewhat related factoid is Nietzsche's opinion that life, in the eyes of the classical Hellenes, was essentially tragic in nature. 'Tragic' refers to the literary concept of a tragedy, specifically the Greek tragedians. Nietzsche says this tragic outlook as the answer to the pessimism & nihilism that seems to be quite inherent to the majority of worldviews, the idea that life is or can be inherently happy is a purely modern delusion. Regardless, my knowledge of ancient Hellenic theatre is admittedly limited. But the tragic view of life does hold some weight when looking at both human life & the history of our species. We are born to die. We build things that turn to dust. We have a certain tendency to pursue things that prove detrimental in the end. Oftentimes, the very things that make civilizations rise end up contributing to their collapse. The constant struggle between Apollo & Dionysus, or rationality & natural instinct, is a story of mutual sabotage within both the human psyche & civilization at large.

This was a stark realization for me, something that vaguely came to on my own before finding that Nietzsche had better developed it already. My Nietzsche deep dive lasted a few months & I ended up reading all his works plus some books on later authors' interpretations. He definitely became the nucleus of my research into philosophy, which is admittedly fairly backwards. Regardless, Nietzsche introduced me to two major concepts. Firstly, his concept of the Death of God which explained much of the religious decline in modern society (or at least in regards to Christianity). Secondly, the way that pre-Christian peoples dealt with the seeming "cruel indifference of the universe/gods"."

It's noteworthy that ancient civilizations did not seem to be pessimistic, regardless of the abysmal material conditions they may have experienced or the attitude of their gods, which were often more or less indifferent with humans at the individual level. Nietzsche blames this on Christianity, saying that they "first painted sin on the walls of the world," and that modern nihilism is caused by the Christian life denying tendencies remaining but people losing faith in the solution. The poison remains but the anecdote is gone.

Following this line of thought, the answer to nihilism is to stop believing in the poison as well. It is to accept the Absurd, and the tragedy of humanity, and to accept the world at face value. Through this acceptance, you gain resonance with the natural world & can therefore live truly authentically. Going down this line of thinking was the culmination of my disenchantment & spiritual longing.

The concept of 'life acceptance' was something that was rather forced, mainly because I didn't fully understand the concept for a while beyond "Nietzsche is life acceptance, Christianity is life denial." As I did come to better understand it, I certainly feel it made me in a better position psychologically in regards to my conflict with the Absurd. Through the lens of this, I came to better understand the thought process of the pre-Christian world.

Probably the best example of this is the story of Achilles, in the Iliad. The dichotomy between Achilles & Agamemnon is a starkly immoral one. To the Christian, and later Liberal, both individuals seem strikingly evil. The idea that either can be considered good, let alone great, men is unthinkable. Achilles is a warrior in every sense, he has no qualms with killing others, raping the son of a god, & bleeds superiority. Agamemnon is a Bronze Age warlord, and is quite unconcerned with things that the modernists ascribe goodness too. While the modern concept of a good king is one who fills a civil servant type role with the serfdom, the reality is exactly the opposite. He did as he pleased, without some moralistic notions of serving his subjects.

This is important, these figures were hugely significant in the minds of the Greeks. They were characters who were meant to be looked up towards, who young men looked to for motivation & inspiration. What stories like the Iliad truly show us is how completely different the worldview of the pre-Christian world really was. In truth, many of the morals of early Christianity (including late Judaism) seem so diametrically opposed to the values that preceded them that one can't help but question whether this was intentional. The Nietzschean view makes this obvious, as Christianity was the principal aspect of the "slave revolt in morality." From this perspective, the values of the ancient world have been truly flipped upside down, and deliberately so.

Unfortunately for the Abrahamic moralizers, the values of the ancient world were often based on how they influenced the success of a people or individual. These traits, both natural & mindset based, still generally relate to success in the realms of fighting, business, sex, etc. The Christian excuse is that all things are worldly & transient, which is fair, but the belief in their afterlife & morality is dropping by the day. The meek will not, in fact, inherit the Earth.

Besides that tangent, this outlook on the world is strikingly optimistic once you accept the absurdity of it all. The issue with 'slave morality' & other spiritual excuses for why the world doesn't match up with moral claims is that this way of thinking is suffocating, it's a nice excuse until you want a way out of it. The Christian view posits that the world is evil, that sexual urges & desires for wealth are akin to the snake in the Garden of Eden whispering into Eve's ear. Certain views, namely Hinduism, posit that we are in a sort of 'dark age.' The cyclical views of those like Spengler or arguably Plato, relating more specifically to civilization rather than a grandiose spiritual system, do have significant merit. However when it comes to the Kali Yuga or Hesiod's Iron Age, periods of almost indescribable length & an omnipresent nature, one must wonder whether it's even worth believing these claims regardless of your spirituality.

For example, let's take the Kali Yuga. The Age of Kali is rather interesting in that its beginning roughly lines up with Hesiod's Golden/Silver Ages. Far more grandiose & wider spanning, but an interesting factoid. Unfortunately, the idea of the Kali Yuga loses any practical value when you realize that it's alleged to span the next 400,000 years. There's very little motivation to do anything to change the world when you are spiritually inclined to think that nothing good can happen for literally thousands of generations. Regardless of whether or not this claim is true, it does give credence to Plato's noble lie. Even if it is true, it doesn't help us at all & is better left as an esoteric secret rather than allow the defeatist sentiment it breeds to run rampant.

The Show Must Go On



The Greeks had a somewhat odd notion of the 'meaning of life," though I'm not sure if this was a true metaphysical claim or simply a product of the importance of theatre in their society. Regardless, they saw the purpose of humanity as entertainment for the gods. The tragic nature of life & the countless stories within humanity serves this purpose. Love, war, ambition, all of it. I've seen many discuss whether this is a cruel fate or a beautiful one, but it's certainly an interesting notion.

Following this notion, it makes sense why the heroes of the era were considered to be almost divine in nature. These important figures in history, from kings to warriors to artists, function as protagonists & antagonists of the world theatre. The lower castes are essentially background characters, or perhaps just lesser storylines. The sitcoms of the gods, if you will, as opposed to the more grandiose epics.

Regardless of the truthfulness of this notion, or whether you even believe the gods to be real, I feel that it is an excellent way of living your life. The idea that the gods are condescendingly watching your petty life, and are simply waiting to be impressed. The idea that a single man like Achilles can be so noteworthy as to not only achieve the attention of the gods, but push them to intervene with his life. The very concept that divine favor must be earned from gods who are otherwise indifferent to your individual existence has so many connotations.

I would say with the utmost certainty that to live your life as a gladiator being watched by the bloodthirsty masses & a Caesar that couldn't care less about your existence is the absolute best course of action. Imagine being a gladiator that's so brave & gains so many victories that the crowd cheers your name, that Caesar takes personal interest in your fights. Imagine a love story so beautiful that it inspires envy in every hopeless romantic & makes Aphrodite herself watch with excitement.

In lieu of properly describing my emotions on this matter, I will ask you listen to *Experience* by Ludovico Einaudi.

In any case, this is how I've chosen to live my life. Regardless of my personal doubts about the existence of the supernatural, I have given myself into a 'noble lie' of my own on existentialistic grounds. It may be true that the "*Great God Pan Is Dead*," it may be true he never existed at all. Regardless, the silent gods deserve a good show. And if not, the stories will be appreciated by our fellow man. Ultimately, it doesn't matter whether or not there were any gods to watch Achilles kill Hector. We still know his deeds three millennia later.

I have resolved to making this the guiding principle of my life. Every girl I love, I do so in a manner to make Aphrodite blush. Every fight I get into, whether in a bar or in the Donbas, I seek the approval of Ares. Every excursion I make into the wild is to appreciate Pan, or seek the respect of Artemis. The patron gods of my life are Dionysus & Wotan, the gods of frenzy & irrationality.

This is the truth of the world, the bleak but beautiful truth. The fact that the rational & irrational forces of humanity will inevitably destroy each other. A truly tragic story, the fate of man. The answer to the Absurd, and to nihilism, is to simply recognize it & carry on regardless. Because when nothing matters, the very idea of meaninglessness doesn't matter either.

As far as I'm concerned, the only real choice in life is to be a background character or an important one. The saying that "what we do in life echoes in eternity" may be true, due to the nature of cause & effect, but these echoes are certainly not equal.

Even at my Lois, I was still a Family Guy…



One of the most notable questions of our age, one that definitely doesn't get the discussion it deserves, is that of marriage. The obvious tradbro answer is to find a good woman, marry, and have a bunch of trad kids. Christians harp on this constantly, marriage is obviously a very important ritual in their religion. Beyond that though, marriage is a fairly useless institution beyond beuracratic concerns. There's probably a different female perspective on this, but there's very little reason for a man to get married. The principal purpose is that humans are innately monogamous & children are meant to be raised with both parents. Women as primary caregivers & men to provide the material conditions conducive to that.

This is the reason for marriage, as an institution. True love has no need for institutionalization, nor will marriage actually preserve love in any way (especially in the era of no fault divorce). Thus, men have very little to gain but a lot to lose, especially in an environment that is very non-conducive to having kids because it's economically infeasible for most families to exist on a single income. I would argue that it's quite shortsighted to advocate marriage so much in our sphere, it will likely end up taking away from the man in question if he has not already established himself. A married man has far less effective freedom to do anything from travel to join an activist group. Even relatively simple things like writing become more difficult with the added stressors of family life.

This isn't necessarily something endemic to women. Penelope, the wife of Odysseus, famously waited 20 years for his return. However, this breed of woman is about as rare as their male counterparts. They're hard to come by these days. I've come across a few, but these types are often more difficult to win over than the commoners. Rightfully so, of course.

Regardless, the true danger of marriage is being tied down & losing freedom. Like a tiger caged into a zoo. The biggest fear most men have towards marriage is being trapped in one without love, not necessarily committing to a monogamous relationship like some others may claim. This is especially true of a certain, and common, strain of women who feel the need to tame otherwise wild men. This a personal issue with me, as a fairly pivotal relationship I had during the latter half of high school represented this well. A woman who's content with stable mediocrity is no mate with a man who wants to strive for something more.

In this relationship, I have found a good allegory within the story of Perseus & Medusa. Medusa representing the women who wish to tame man, to domesticate him, to turn him to stone in a sense. Under this interpretation, Perseus becomes a masculinist icon. A wild man who refuses to be tied down. What's also important is that Perseus does end up marrying Andromeda, but only after becoming a hero & earning his kingship.

In an era where masculinity is both demonized & in short supply, and there's an over abundance of feminine influences on men, this interpretation of Pereus' beheading of Medusa may act as a helpful symbol to some young men reading. The statue of Perseus holding the gorgoneion, certainly one of the most well known, should be taken as a masculinist symbol. Not in a closeted homosexual MGTOW way, but as an assertion of freedom & independence from the feminine nature that we do not share. A symbol of defiance against the metaphorical longhouse.



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